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Series I. Personal Materials. Folder 2. Articles about Family of M. Homer Cummings, 1922-1968

Melville Homer Cummings

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The Herald-Dispatch/Frank Altizer

Mel Cummings IV, a fourth-grader at Cammack Elementary School, listens to a conversation his father, Cabell County Board of Education President Mel Cummings, has during vote tabulations at the courthouse Tuesday night.

Meet The Newcomers



MRS. CUMMINGS AND CHILDREN

Caring For Folks Trait Of Cummings'

By JUSTINE WALKER

Like his father and brother, Dr. Melville H. Cummings, resident surgeon at St. Mary's Hospital, has decided to devote his life to caring for his flock, but in a slightly different way. He is the son of a Methodist minister and his brother, the Rev. Hugh Cummings, was formerly assistant pastor at Johnson Memorial Methodist Church.

Dr. and Mrs. Cummings and their two sons, Mel and John Leslie, aged five and three respectively, came to Huntington July 1 after completion of his medical schooling at Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill. He will serve two years in residence at St. Mary's, specializing in surgery, before establishing his own practice. Originally from Fayetteville,

W. Va., Dr. Cummings took his pre-medical course at Marshall College, later attending West Virginia University. Mrs. Cummings is from Williamstown, W. Va., and attended Marietta College, at Marietta, O.

Dr. Cummings served for two years as a captain in the Army and was joined in Germany by his wife and sons 15 months before returning to the United States in January. Mrs. Cummings describes Germany as "a great experience" and the countryside as "very beautiful," but having lived for a year in Berlin, has decided that foreign travel is not for Army wives.

As a sidelight, Dr. and Mrs. Cummings are both interested in photography, their present specialty being color shots.

Cummings Appointed To School Board Seat

The Cabell County Board of Education in special session yesterday at the board offices in the Holderby Building named Dr. M. Homer Cummings Jr., 2206 Inwood Drive, to membership on the board to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Harry Dodson. Mr. Dodson withdrew to seek the Democratic nomination for sheriff.

Dr. Cummings, who is associated with Dr. W. E. Irons in the practice of general surgery here, will take office immediately upon being sworn in sometime this week at the office of Olin C. Nutter, superintendent of schools, and will serve until the primary election in May.

Dr. Cummings' name was proposed by H. B. Thornburg and the motion was seconded by Dr. Albert Dietz. The vote was unanimous, the other two board members, Mrs. Douglas C. Tomkies and H. E. Danford, voting in the affirmative.

DR. CUMMINGS is not now a candidate for election to the Board of Education. However, he was one of 12 candidates for office whose certificates of candidacy were rejected by the Cabell County Ballot Commission because they bore a postmark past the deadline of midnight, February 9. Dr. Cummings had filed for the six-year term on the Board of Education that begins next January 1.

The new board member holds Bachelor of Science degrees from Marshall College and West Virginia University and received his doctor's degree in medicine from Northwestern University. He interned in Cleveland and has had special training in general surgery. His office is located in the West Virginia Building.

Dr. and Mrs. Cummings are the parents of four children; two of whom attend the Marshall laboratory school. He is a son of the Rev. Homer Cummings of Glasgow, W. Va., who was at one time pastor of the Methodist Church at Ceredo, and is a brother of the Rev. Hugh Cummings, pastor of the Methodist Church at Gassaway, W. Va., formerly assistant pastor at Johnson Memorial Methodist Church.

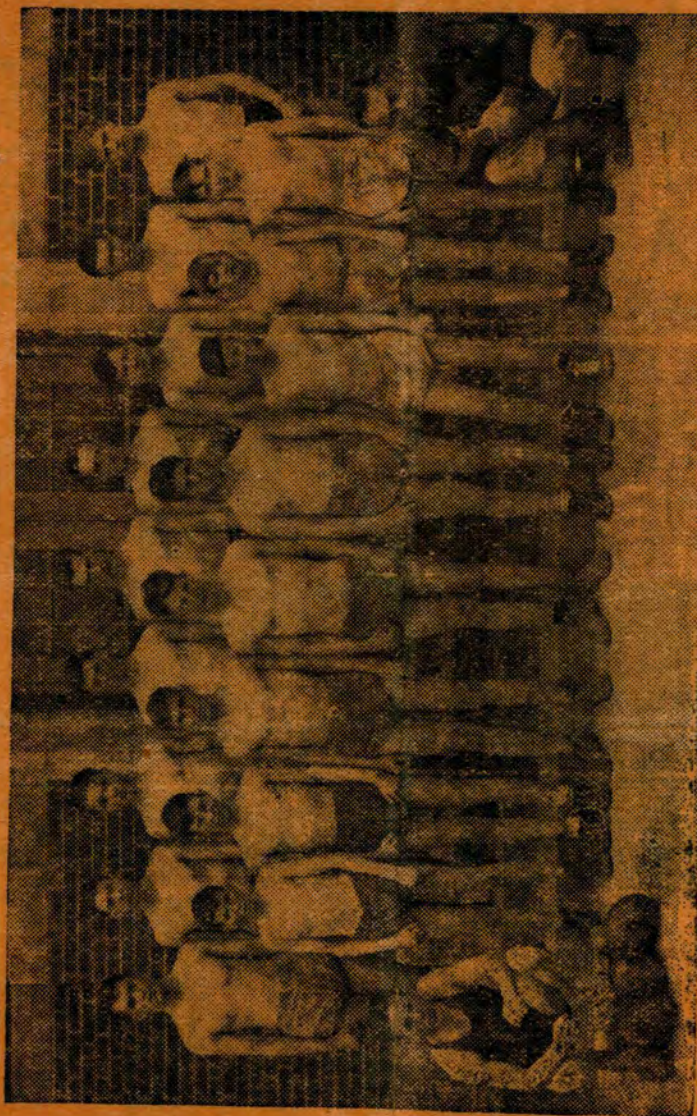
DR. CUMMINGS is a member of Johnson Memorial Methodist Church and of the Cabell County Medical Society.

He served for several years with the armed forces and was stationed at the 279th station hospital in Berlin for almost two years. He also served during his military career as surgical consultant for the U. S. Army's war prisoners at Spandau.

Earlier the Board of Education had conferred on selection of a successor to Mr. Dodson, but had failed to reach an agreement.

Under the law the four remaining board members had 30 days from January 29 in which to select the fifth member. Had they failed to do so by the end of that period, the prerogative would have passed to the state superintendent of schools.

Fayette County High School Boxing Champions



Here are Fayetteville's Pirates, who won the Fayette county boxing championship in the first annual tournament. Reading left to right, back row: Homer Cummings, Dewey Mann, Hugh Smith, Carl Davis, Mason Propps, George Young, Robert Ball, Alfred Mann, Robert Brooks. Front row: Trainer Johnny Edwards, Tom Richardson, Dan Burgess, Edward Wygal, Paul Maynor, Raymond Prater, Edward Decker, Robert Mahood, and Coach A. E. Whanger. Myles Wickline and Frank Spangler were absent when the picture was taken.

Lt. Cummings Describes Inside Germany; Sees War Trials, Goering

"On the morning of June 27, on arising early, I realized that I was in Germany, the country that we fought so bitterly in two wars," Lt. M. Homer Cummings, Jr., who left the States recently for occupational duty with the Army Medical Corps, wrote his parents, the Rev. and Mrs. M. Homer Cummings, of Coalwood, in a recent letter from Bamberg, Germany.

"To my surprise the land looked like southern West Virginia around Lewisburg and White Sulphur Springs," he continues. "Every available strip of land in the valley between the mountains was being used. The gardens were perfect—much prettier than the ones back in the States. They were being worked by men, women and children.

Arrive In Frankfurt

"We arrived at Frankfurt on the Main at the South Station. From there we were assigned to Hotel Preussischer (room 7). The accommodations were excellent although the surrounding buildings were wrecks.

"Now about Frankfurt—it apparently had been a beautiful city with a pre-war population of 550,000 (slightly larger than Cincinnati). I was amazed when I saw what was left. Over seventy per cent of the entire city was nothing but ruins. I had no idea what our bombings had done. We would drive blocks and see nothing but the hulls of former buildings. It will take 25 or more years to build up Frankfurt.

Germans Ignore Americans

"The German people ignore us—they appear to be bitter because of the bombings. Most of them here are homeless. Many children are suffering from malnutrition. The streets are filled with children begging for candy, food, chewing gum, etc. Many children have never seen apples or oranges.

All during our trip we have had food better than we had in the States—steaks and butter with every meal except breakfast.

In Bavaria

"We stayed one night at Frankfurt—then we left for Bamberg, a city of about 100,000 in Bavaria, South Germany. The scenery was beautiful—almost the prettiest I have ever seen. The fields were so green and the mountains in the background were full of verdant vegetation. Women, men and children were working in the fields. Cows, horses and oxen were pulling the wagons. The small towns were not bothered by shell fire or bombs.

Bamberg is a very interesting city although it is very old. One of the German popes is buried here.

Sunday, July 1, I went to church twice. Both services were extremely interesting. They were conducted by a Baptist minister who experienced that which he was preaching. We need more chaplains like him. He was about 30 years of age. He lived in Texas and was educated at Baylor and Southern Baptist in Louisville.

Attends War Trials

"Yesterday, July 2, I went to Nurnberg which is about 40 miles from here. While there I went to the International Military Tri-

bunal to watch the trials. I saw Hermann Goering, Wilhelm Keitel, Ernest Kaltenbrunner, Alfred Rosenberg, Karl Doenitz, Julius Streicher, Alfred Jodl (signer of the surrender), Von Papen, Seyss-Inquart and others. I also saw Robert H. Jackson and Francis Biddle as well as many other American and foreign notables.

"Goering was smiling when he entered the court room and at times joked with his fellow prisoners. Keitel was very quiet as was Doenitz. Jodl and Streicher appeared ill at ease and jittery.

"The court room was very small—smaller than the court room at Fayetteville. I was surprised when I saw its size.

Assigned to Erlangen

"I have been assigned to the 62 Field Hospital, Erlangen, Germany. It is eight miles north of Nurnberg in Bavaria. Erlangen is an old town with a population of 30,000. It was not bombed or injured by shell fire.

"A lot of water has gone over the falls since my departure. As you know, I left the States aboard the George Washington for La Harve, France. We landed there June 23. Immediately we went to a camp called Philip Morris, located just outside of LaHarve. We stayed at this place one day. The country in this area is somewhat pretty although the French appear to be neglecting it. The people were very poor and seemed to be lazy.

"The night of June 24 we departed for Paris, aboard a former German train. We arrived in Paris, June 25. From the station we went to the Majestic Hotel (former German Headquarters in France) for billeting. We were assigned to the Hotel de Jubilee.

Sights in Paris

"While in Paris I saw many interesting sights such as the Notre Dame Cathedral, Sai te Chapelle, Palace de Justice, Hotel de Ville (City Hall), Institute de France, Chapelle des Invalides (which had Napoleon's tomb), Eiffel Tower, "Arc de Triomphe (unknown soldier's tomb), Royal Palace and

numerous other sights.

"We left Paris for Frankfurt, Germany, aboard a pullman train with first class accommodations. Our train passed through Chateau Thierry, Chalon on Marne, Metz, Strausburg, etc. That area of France was much nicer than the western land near the coast.

"Love to both of you."